articles posted locally in big cities like Delhi:

(i) Punctual clearance of letter boxes.

(ii) Timely despatch of such mail to the sorting offices.

(iii) Accurate sorting of such mail at the Sorting Offices.

(iv) Prompt despatch of such mail to the delivery post offices.

(v) Correct and regular delivery of such mail by the postmen.

(vi) Encouraging use of Pin-Code by public.

(vii) Re-adjustment of delivery arrangements in post offices in view of the newly developing colonies and shortage of postmen due to ban on recruitment.

Norms for New Post Offices in Backward Tribal Areas

*434. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the existing norms for the opening of new post offices are so rigid that the backward tribal areas are not likely to derive the benefit of this primary facility for years together; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to alter and adopt the norms in favour of the neglected and backward tribal areas?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) No, Sir. On the contrary, during the current year, out of 222 new post offices sanctioned so far, 157 are in hilly, backward and tribal areas.

(b) While there is no proposal for revision at present, the existing norms will be reviewed as and when the need is felt.

Assistance to celebrated Poets, etc.

*435. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: DR. H. P. SHARMA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme for providing assistance to the celebrated poets, writers and scholars etc;

(b) if so, what are details of the scheme; and

(c) whether Government propose to give pension to such persons as is given to freedom fighters and if so, by when a final decision is likely to be taken in the matter and if not, what are reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) and (b) *Yes, Sir. There are schemes of* financial assisance to persons distinguished in letters, arts and such other walks of life who may be in indigent circumstances and their dependents, award of Fellowships to the outstanding Artistes in the fields of Performing, Literary and Plastic Arts and also Emeritus Fellowships to most Eminent Artistes in the fields of Performing, Literary and Plastic Arts. Under the scheme of financial assistance to artistes in indigent circumstances an artiste above the age of 58 years is granted an assistance of Rs. 400 to Rs. 600 per month if his income is less than Rs. 1000 per month.

(c) The scheme of financial assistance to persons distinguished in letters, arts and such other walks of life who may be in indigent circumstances and their dependents is considered to be adequate for the purpose. There is no other proposal before Government.